

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARAB COMMUNITY CENTER FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SERVICES

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services located in the heart of Dearborn, MI. Created in 1971 out of a storefront on the impoverished south end of Dearborn, ACCESS has been engaging and building a community to empower individuals, families, and community members ever since. What began with a modest, volunteer-run effort to support the growing immigrant population has blossomed into the largest Arab American community nonprofit in the United States. ACCESS has been integral in assisting the growing Arab population as they adapt to life in the United States. By uplifting and advocating for real and meaningful change, they have become committed to safeguarding the engagement of Arab Americans throughout Michigan.

Fittingly, the mission of ACCESS is "To empower communities to improve their health and their economic, social, and cultural well-being." Spread throughout metro Detroit, ACCESS has 10 locations that provide more than 120 different programs/services to the community; they provide educational opportunities for youth including the Arab American Youth Leadership course, in which they support and foster the identity of the Arab American youth, as well as their 21st Century Community Learning Centers, which provide academic support during the school year and enrichment in the summer. Children are exposed to topics that focus on their identity and culture, as well as help build their advocacy, leadership, and civic engagement skills through youth empowerment to encourage community involvement.

In addition to youth services, ACCESS also offers a large variety of services to adults, especially recent immigrants. ACCESS provides subsidized immigration services to the community, as well as many free services addressing the community's basic needs, such as tax assistance, legal services, and assistance with public benefits programs. They also provide life skills training to settling families via their Center for Working Families, including financial coaching, workforce development, and skill-building. Most profoundly, ACCESS provides affordable healthcare through two community health and research centers—a fully integrated community health "one-stop service center" that is comprised of medical, public health and research programs, as well as mental and behavioral health programs.

While mainly focused on direct assistance to individuals, ACCESS also works to preserve the Arab American history and cultural identity through national programs such as the National Network for Arab American Communities, the Center for Arab American Philanthropy, and most notably, the

Arab American National Museum, founded in 2005; the museum is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institute and is the Nation's only cultural institution devoted solely to document, preserve, and present the history, culture, and contributions of Arab Americans.

ACCESS has impacted countless lives throughout the course of 50 years. I ask my colleagues to join me today in recognizing ACCESS for their tireless advocacy and support of the Arab American community, both in Michigan and nationwide. I wish ACCESS continued growth and prosperity in the years ahead.●

120TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROYAL OAK WOMEN'S CLUB

• Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 120th anniversary of the Royal Oak Women's Club. For over 120 years, the Royal Oak Women's Club—ROWC—members have come together for the purpose of society and service within the Royal Oak community.

On the evening of November 8, 1902, 14 local Royal Oak women gathered together in the parlor of Mrs. Frances Lathrup Martin, for the purpose of creating a study club. It was Mrs. Martin herself that became the first president of the newly formed club. At the time of its founding, the club's mission included the expansion of opportunities for local women, pursuit of issues such as pediatric health and safety, and the promotion of general well-being within the Royal Oak community.

Over the years, as the ROWC expanded its presence in the area by joining larger regional organizations such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs—GFWC—the Michigan Federation of Women's Clubs—GFWC MI—Detroit Federation of Women's Clubs, and the Oakland County Federation of Women's Clubs. The club also transformed to become increasingly civic-minded, with efforts including local advocacy campaigns that resulted in better safety and sanitary equipment within Royal Oak's local public schools.

One-hundred and twenty years later the club has continued to expand and evolve, and now boasts a membership of over 120 persons, who dedicate their time toward the pursuit of community projects that promote good citizenship, civism, and quality education. The ROWC continues to hold a place of high esteem and local importance to the city, with many community groups and organizations using group's clubhouse as a location to hold meetings and events. The clubhouse itself holds significance, for both club and community. The structure, purchased by the ROWC in the 1920s, was even then one of the oldest buildings in the city. Originally a Baptist church constructed in 1839, the building has been relocated and restored as necessary for its preservation and continued use, but continues to exhibit many original fea-

tures. Upkeep of this structure, which was designated in 1979 as a Michigan Registered Historical Site, 1999 a Royal Oak Historic District, and is known today as the city's oldest building, remains among the club member's highest charges.

The Royal Oak Women's club continues to make a difference today through their philanthropic efforts, as well as by providing the women of Royal Oak with a space they may gather, exchange ideas and knowledge, and pursue the "high ideals" envisioned by the club's original members. Their efforts to support the community continue as well; the club provides financial support to the neonatal unit at Beaumont Hospital, the Royal Oak Library, Haven of Oakland County, the Boys and Girls Club for Southeast Michigan, and the South Oakland Shelter to name just a few of their initiatives. Members of the ROWC also volunteer their time to support the annual Royal Oak Community Awards banquet, the community service luncheon, and the annual Salvation Army Toy Luncheon, in addition to supporting the all-night graduation parties for the three local high schools.

The Royal Oak Women's Club has been an integral part of the Royal Oak community and the overall community of southeast Michigan for more than 120 years. As a Michigander and a resident of Oakland County, I am honored to ask my colleagues in joining me in celebrating this significant milestone for the Royal Oak Women's Club, its members, and the entire city of Royal Oak. I wish the Royal Oak Women's Club continued growth and prosperity in the years ahead.●

REMEMBERING ADA MARKITA FISHER

• Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I rise today to remember a friend and a great North Carolinian, Ada Markita Fisher, who unexpectedly died on October 7, 2022. Ada was 74 years old and only a few weeks away from her 75th birthday.

As a young African-American woman, she was a trailblazer. After completing a degree in biology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro—UNCG—she went on to become the first Black female to earn a medical degree at the University of Wisconsin's School of Medicine and Public Health. She was also the first Black UNCG alumna to complete a medical degree. Additionally, she completed her masters in public health at Johns Hopkins University's School of Hygiene and Public Health in 1981.

After completing her medical degree, Ada chose to return to North Carolina to provide medical care to an underserved community and lead programs for victims of substance abuse. She spent some of her career in the private sector, but most of her life was dedicated to helping people who were struggling and ultimately making a positive difference in her community.